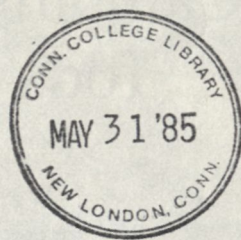


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Citizens' Bulletin

Volume 12 Number 9 May 1985 \$5/yr.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection



Camping in Connecticut

Citizens' Bulletin

May 1985
Volume 12, Number 9 \$5/year

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The Wider View

Camping Today



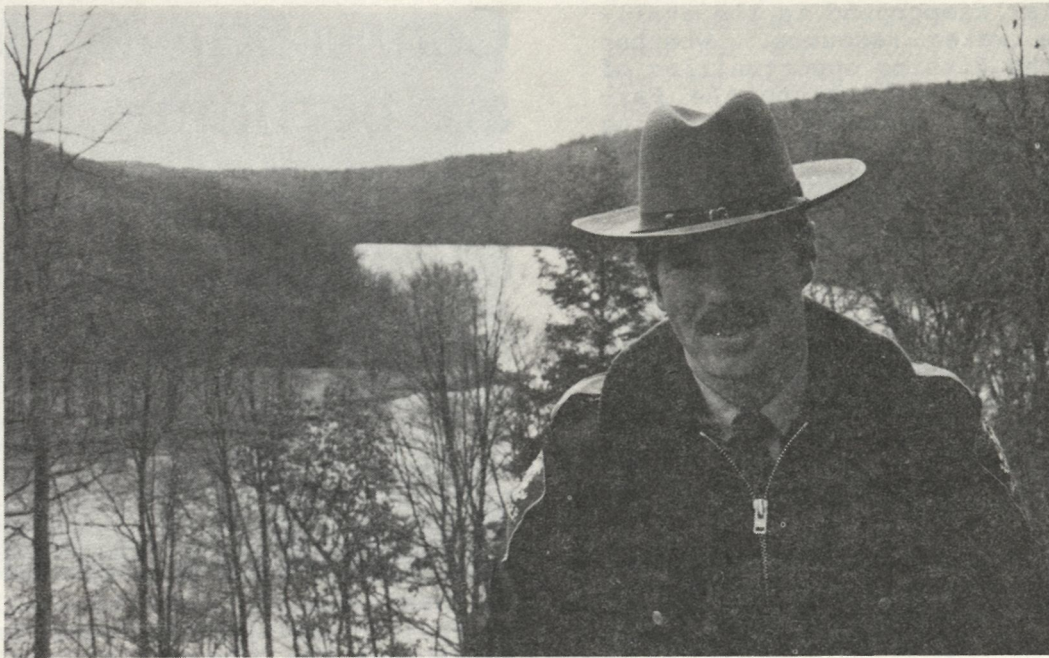
By Dick Clifford
Director, Office of State Parks and Recreation

At one of the oldest state park systems in the United States, Connecticut has offered a variety of camping opportunities for the past 71 years. The earliest facilities, constructed of wood and canvas, were provided for rental at Hammonasset Beach in 1914 for park patrons who didn't have camping gear. In the 1920s, the car-camper was popular; this was a large canvas tent attached to and surrounding the rear of the vehicle. Later years saw the use of the travel-trailer, the pop-up, the pickup camper, and, eventually, the RV as the ultimate in travelling convenience. During this latter period of progression in equipment, there was also, ironically, a renewal of interest in the more basic styles, such as backpack and tent camping. In the early years, the state of Connecticut was viewed as a leader in the East in the camping industry.

Campground expansion continued into the post-war era, to the point where it represented a significant portion of the tourist economy. It's interesting to note that the first private campground in Connecticut was established in 1956. The growth in the private sector from this point far outpaced that of the state, but it also offered a slightly different type of camping. While they couldn't offer the unique character and extensive acreage of public land, private owners concentrated on amenities such as electric and water hook ups and emphasized the social aspects of camping with organized programs and activities.

Today the camping programs administered in Connecticut state parks and forests are aimed at giving our citizens a safe and enjoyable overnight stay in some of the most attractive landscapes in the Northeast.

Although family campsites account for most of the use, there is a broad range of other programs which offers a variety of camping experiences and a chance to get a new perspective on the beauty of Connecticut. If the campground has become commonplace for you or if you're bored sitting in your air-conditioned RV, try paddling out to a site at Selden Island this summer, or sleeping under the stars along the Tunxis Trail.



Unit Manager Tim O'Donohue at Kettletown State Park: "My greatest satisfaction is giving people a feeling for nature and seeing the wide eyes of the kids."

Camping in Connecticut

Text and photos by Robert Paier

The state of Connecticut's Department of Environmental Protection would like to extend a cordial invitation to you and your family to spend some time in the fresh air, to swim in cool, clear lakes and by white, sandy beaches, walk along winding forest paths, sunbathe, explore a salt marsh, spy on a herd of deer, picnic under a sweet-smelling pine tree, gaze over the ocean from a spectacular fortress pavillion, watch for shooting stars at night, and hear the birds singing in the morning. The cost for all this is seven dollars per night, per campsite.

Those are just some the camping experiences available right here, not very far from where you live, wherever you live. And, increasingly, according to Dick Clifford, Director of DEP's Office of State Parks and Recreation, each year more Connecticut residents are beginning to realize the beauty and joy of Connecticut's state parks and forests. Campgrounds are here for them too, and not just for vacationing out-of-staters.

"We are proud to offer a wide range of camping experiences," says Clifford. "We have camping areas for the hardest wilderness seeker, which offer the most remote and primitive of conditions as in Nipmuck State Forest, as well as campgrounds for the whole family, offering the conveniences of hot showers, concession stands, and events such as movies and dances."

The Camping Experience

In creating and designing the camping program in Connecticut's state parks and forests, a conscious effort was made to provide campsites with access to the state's unique natural resources. Another consideration has been the general convenience of the visitor; every effort has been made to create a congenial, relaxed atmosphere in which to enjoy the outdoors. And a third factor has been an ongoing concern for public health and safety. "People can come to our parks," as one park manager stated, "and feel secure."

According to Clifford, the primary component responsible for the popularity

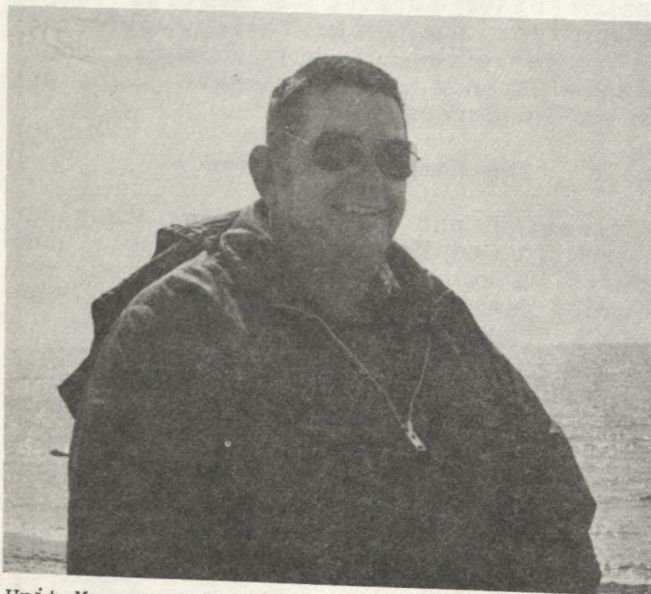
of a particular campground is the availability of a water resource. Whether this may be the fishing opportunities of Austin Hawes Campground along the Farmington River, the swimming and boating at Hopeville Pond, or the spectacular ocean beaches of Rocky Neck State Park, water is the single most important consideration in choosing a campground.

"Each campground has its own unique characteristics," says Clifford, "and each campground seems to develop a loyal clientele. Many people have found a particular campground that appeals to them personally, and they keep coming back year after year."

The Reservation System

Connecticut was one of the first states to initiate a reservation system for its campgrounds in response to public demand for a way of advanced planning for vacations. Reservations are accepted by mail only. From January 15 until the third Saturday in April (the beginning of the camping season), reservations are sent to the Hartford Office of State Parks and Recreation in Hartford. After the season begins and until it closes, on September 30, reservations are mailed directly to the respective campground. Applicants may obtain a map of the campground, and request specific sites.

Some campgrounds are more popular than others, and it is generally agreed that unless you have a reservation in advance to stay at Rocky Neck over Memorial Day, the best advice is to think in terms of



Unit Manager Gary Thomas at Hammonasset Beach State Park: "People can come here and feel secure."

Connecticut residents are beginning to realize the joy and beauty of our parks are here for them too.

another campground. On the other hand, when individual park managers were asked whether they might have room for people who suddenly found themselves with some free days in the middle of the week but without reservations, they all indicated that the chances were good. Reservations are always the best bet, but if for some reason you choose to operate on a spur-of-the-moment basis, you can still find a site at most campgrounds during non-peak periods. During the summer months, major radio stations regularly broadcast reports of campsite availability in the state parks.

The fees per campsite range from \$4 in areas with minimal development and facilities, to \$7 at the two major campgrounds on Long Island Sound. There is a limit of 21 days per stay. More detailed information on the reservation system and applications may be obtained by requesting the brochure "Camping in Connecticut" from the Department of Environmental Protection, Office of State Parks and Recreation, 165 Capital Avenue, Hartford, 06106.

Backpack Camping

For the more adventurous, for those who feel the call of the at least partially wild, the state of Connecticut has established a number of backpacking trails, which generally follow certain Blue Blazed Hiking Trails, and offer the most primitive of facilities. Camping is allowed in designated zones. While in some cases there are "Adirondack-type" camp shelters available, in most cases no shelters exist, and those using these trails are also advised to carry their own drinking water.

Backpack camping is designed for those who intend to spend only one night at any given location. The campsites are available all year round, barring extreme weather conditions.



Our state parks offer campgrounds for the heartiest wilderness seeker as well as for the whole family.

Backpack camping is allowed in Nipmuck, Natchaug, Pachaug State Forest Trails, and along the Tunxis Trail.

Canoe Camping

Canoe camping represents another of the recreational possibilities available within Connecticut. There are three sites in the state -- Gillette Castle, Hurd, and Selden Neck State Parks -- which provide camping areas accessible only by boat. With no mooring facilities as such, these areas are specially suited to canoeists and kayakers. The sites are primitive, situated along the riverside, with drinking water, fireplaces, and pit toilets available. The fee is \$2 per person.

Canoes and associated equipment are also available for rental at Gillette Castle for those adventurous souls without their own gear.

The Parks and their Managers

While the state park system within Connecticut is based on the natural beauty and unique resources of each area, there is another element in the equation which is also critical for the enjoyment of a vacation: this is the human element, the people, both permanent and seasonal, who are dedicated to nothing less than making your stay as enjoyable and rewarding as they can. People responsible for the daily management of state parks and forest recreation areas tend to approach their jobs

with dedication, with a sense of respect both for the natural surroundings and for the people who visit them and who share the same enjoyment of the outdoors.

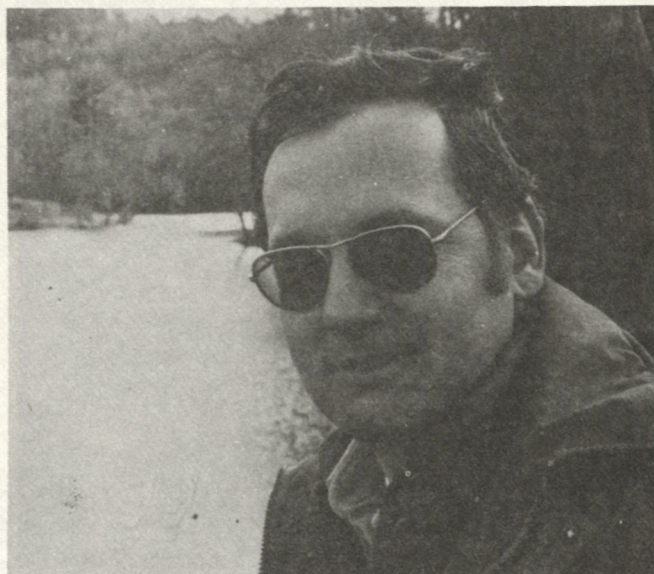
Black Rock State Park

"The people who come here know that I am their friend. My job isn't just to give them a piece of ground and walk away. I try to be around and know what they want." Dan Dickinson, Manager at Black Rock State Park, approaches his job and relationship to the campers with pride and enthusiasm. "You have to love this work," he says, "or else you couldn't spend the time it takes to do it right."

Black Rock State Park is located two miles west of Thomaston on Route 6. On its 443 acres, there are 90 campsites. The name "Black Rock" is derived from the local graphite deposits which the early settlers of the Naugatuck Valley were allowed to mine by the resident Indians.

Visitors can enjoy the scenery of the Western Highlands while hiking the blue-blazed Mattatuck Trail which connects the Park to the woodland sections of the Mattatuck State Forest. Collecting arrowheads in this area is a fascinating pastime.

The park offers swimming, pond and stream fishing, and weekly activities such as nature walks and movies. A weekly schedule of activities is



Unit Manager Dan Dickinson at Black Rock State Park: "People who come here know that I am their friend."

provided for the convenience of visitors.

Kettletown State Park

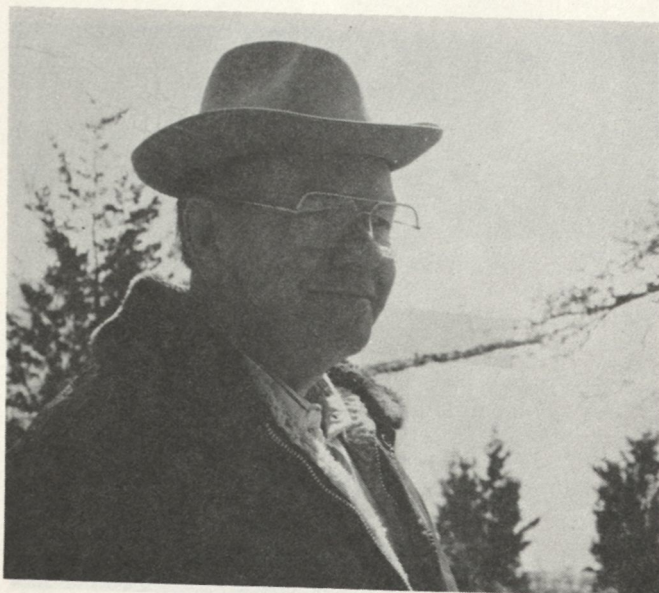
Kettletown State Park, on Lake Zoar in Southbury and Oxford, has 72 campsites spread over 492 acres. The park offers some spectacular scenery, with many campsites overlooking the lake and nearby mountains. Manager Tim O'Donohue hopes that people will "come here and see what we have for them."

Kettletown boasts an extensive program of summer activities for campers. There is a very thorough environmental education program under the direction of a full-time nature interpreter, as well as regular visits, lectures, films, and nature walks by members of various environmental and nature groups.

"We try to give people an appreciation of nature and the wildlife," says O'Donohue. "The greatest satisfaction I have is seeing the wide eyes of the kids, and I know a special kind of learning is taking place."

Lake Waramaug State Park

With 88 campsites on 95 acres, Lake Waramaug is located near the town of New Preston on the lake, which is the primary attraction for the many campers who come here regularly. Park Manager Bill Dougal is a man of long experience within the parks system. He approaches his job with humor and sensitivity, and



Unit Manager Al Millane at Rocky Neck State Park: confidently in charge of an overwhelmingly beautiful park.

"Our goal is to provide access to the state's natural resources for a safe and enjoyable experience in the outdoors."

Dick Clifford

says simply, "We do our best to make a visit here pleasant and entertaining."

This park offers an improved beachfront, flush toilets, and hot showers. Because of the location and orientation of the lake, it provides ideal conditions for competitive rowing. In May, the Founder's Cup Race and the Eastern Association of Women's Rowing Race are held on the lake and hosted at the park. In April, an event which leaves Park Manager Dougal shaking his head occurs: this is the "Ultra-marathon," a foot-race 10 times around the lake for a total of 60 miles. Those considering training for this event are advised to build up slowly.

Hammonasset Beach State Park

Hammonasset Beach State Park is the largest of the shore parks, with 915 acres, 550 campsites, and over two miles of beach. It is also one of the most popular. "The sun is our big attraction," says Manager Gary Thomas. Also extremely popular is Meigs Point Nature Center, which is located on a grassy knoll on the east end of the park, and which presents educational exhibits and programs on the ecology of the coast.

The size and popularity of Hammonasset State Park requires that a total of 110 seasonal employees, including patrolmen, maintenance people, life guards, and nurses, be available.

Special events for campers are coordinated by camp hosts, movies are shown weekly, and bingo nights, fashion shows, and sports programs are held. "This is one of the showcase parks,"



Unit Manager Bill Dougal of Lake Waramaug State Park: "We do our best to make a visit pleasant."

says Manager Thomas. "There is a kind of tradition here."

Rocky Neck State Park

Rocky Neck State Park in Niantic, with 169 campsites spread over 708 acres is, as Park Manager Al Millane will confidently let you discover, overwhelming in its beauty. Rocky Neck State Park boasts, among other things, a gorgeous white sand beach, picnic tables situated in secluded nooks on wave-carved rocks, quiet hiking trails, a salt marsh, nature center, amphitheatre, its own library, and its own herd of deer. And, overlooking it all, like a great, mythical, medieval castle, is the Ellie Mitchell Pavillion. This a large stone building constructed in 1935, with polished oak tables and a fireplace you can stand up in. The first floor is available for anyone with a picnic lunch and a desire for a breathtaking view of Long Island Sound. The second floor is available for rental and is a popular place for weddings and catered parties.

The spectacular nature of Rocky Neck's beauty has been sufficient to catch the eye of Hollywood movie makers. Several years ago, a movie company, complete with stars, equipment, helicopters and exploding bridges, partook of the scenery at Rocky Neck.

And, once again, it is not only the physical facilities which make this

campground so enjoyable, it is also the staff, both permanent and seasonal, who can take the credit. The staff of Rocky Neck State Park, under the direction of Manager Millane, are dedicated to making your camping trip as safe and rewarding as possible.

To Have a Good Time and to Be Considerate of Others

The approach taken by the Office of State Parks and Recreation is very simple and straightforward: "Our goal," says Dick Clifford, "is to provide access to the state's unique natural resources for a safe and enjoyable experience in the Connecticut outdoors. Our major responsibility beyond this is the long-term protection of the resources for future generations."

It is this attitude which creates a sense of both safety and relaxation in Connecticut's parks, and which helps bring people back year after year. All that is asked in return for the use of the campgrounds, really, is to be considerate of others who are there with you and who will come after you.

In 1984, more than eight million people visited or camped at Connecticut's state parks and forests, which is not to say that there are no longer any secluded, quiet, and private areas, because there are. The point is that a very wonderful and rare resource is available for us here, in our state, and all that is asked in return is that we treat it with care and respect. ■



File photo

Connecticut's campgrounds provide a place to relax, enjoy the outdoors, and feel secure.

Something Lovely in May

By Penni Sharp

Illustrations by the Author

No one can argue the fact that the month of May has a lot of good things going for it. Warm, steady temperatures are typical, not too hot, and not too cold. Days are longer, and even the nine-to-fiver can find an hour or two at the end of a day to enjoy the outdoors. There is time in the evening to explore a small woodlot, to walk along a beach, or work in the yard.

In May, I find myself eager to rise each morning to see what the day will bring. Birdsong, beginning in the pre-dawn hours, beckons me outdoors. There is much to see and hear, and the freshness of everything gives this month its special quality. The birds sport their crisp breeding plumage. Delicate spring flowers unfurl in the woods, adding splashes of color to the brown forest floor. And, of course, there are the blossoming trees -- apple, cherry, shadblow, and dogwood.

But, of the many things that seem to characterize the month of May, I think the flowering dogwood may be loveliest of all.

I am not alone in my appreciation of this native

tree. In Connecticut, at least one town celebrates an annual dogwood festival. Many events, including weddings, are planned to coincide with the bloom-



Flowering dogwood
(*Cornus florida*)

ing of the dogwood. Although its beauty is spectacular in May, the dogwood is a handsome tree at any time of the year; even its winter silhouette has a delicate grace and charm.

Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) belongs to the plant family Cornaceae. Although the family includes about 11 genera, only one genus (*Cornus*) occurs in Connecticut. Of this genus, there are only a few species, so that it is possible to learn the all with relative ease.

Flowering dogwood is a common understory tree in moist, hardwood forests. It is a small to medium-sized tree, ranging in height from about 12 to 40 feet. Dogwood bark is finely checkered and resembles the hide of an alligator. This can be a good field mark for winter identification. Like other members of the dogwood family (except for one species), the flowering dogwood has opposite, simple leaves with untoothed margins. The veins on dogwood leaves curve and tend to parallel the margin. This type of venation is called *arcuate* and is a good diagnostic clue as it is found in all the dogwoods and is quite rare in other plant families.

The flowers of the tree are actually small and inconspicuous. Beneath the flower cluster are four

large bracts, creamy white in the wild, which give the tree its delicate beauty at flowering time. People often mistakenly think of the bracts as petals of the flower. Careful examination of the plant will help clear up this misunderstanding.

Dogwood has many other values in addition to its handsome appearance. The bright red fruits, though bitter to the human palate, are enjoyed by numerous song birds, game birds, squirrels, deer, skunks, and rabbits.

Different parts of the tree have been put to a variety of uses. Its powdered bark can be used as toothpaste, and its small branches can be split and utilized as toothbrushes. The roots make a brilliant red dye which was used widely by the Indians, and the inner bark has been used as a substitute for quinine.

Anyone who has touched a dogwood tree can attest to the hardness of the wood. In fact, the generic name Cornus comes from the Latin cornu, a horn, and alludes to the hardness of the wood. A number of products have been fashioned from the close-grained wood, including tool handles, golf club heads, bobbins, and mallets. Skewers and knives have also been made of the wood, and in England, a related tree is known as "dagwood," from the Old English "dagge" (a dagger).

Until recently, flowering dogwood has been widely planted as an ornamental. During the past five or six years, however, symptoms of decline have been noted in dogwood trees, particularly in the southwestern and central parts of the state,

leading many growers to shy away from cultivating this species. Dead twigs and branches and discolored leaves characterize the affected trees.

Two species of fungi have been noted on diseased trees. Researchers at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station believe that trees subjected to unusual stress, such as a cold winter followed by an excessively rainy spring and/or dry summer, become weakened and therefore susceptible to attack from the fungi. If decline is



Silky dogwood
(Cornus amomun)

observed on a particular tree, it is best to remove the dead branches. Keeping the root zone free of vegetative cover-plants and watering the tree during periods of drought may also be helpful in protecting the dogwood from further decline.

The flowering dogwood is the largest and most con-

spicuous member of the genus in Connecticut. There are, however, several dogwood shrubs which are a part of our landscape, particularly in meadows and along roadsides and the banks of streams.

Grey-stemmed dogwood, also called red-panicle dogwood (Cornus racemosa), is a plant of open areas and commonly grows at the edges of abandoned fields and meadows. It grows in tightly-packed groves of individual plants and has smooth, grey stems and narrow, lance-shaped leaves.

Red panicles, which appear where the berries were attached to the plant, often persist at the tips of the branches into late fall and winter. The berries themselves are waxy-white and are a popular food among birds, particularly the pheasant and ruffed grouse. The white berries, borne on red stalks, are much showier than the small white flowers that precede them. The flowers are whitish and occur on long, cone-like clusters; they bloom from June to July.

Grey-stemmed dogwood is used by many species of birds not only as an important food source but also as a nesting site. Its location at the edge of fields and its thicket-like growth habits make it doubly advantageous to birds. At field margins, insect and seed supplies are abundant, and dense groves of grey-stemmed dogwood provide excellent cover and support to nesting birds.

Another dogwood shrub common in Connecticut is silky dogwood (Cornus amomun). This sprawling shrub is common in swamps and along the banks of

streams. It will also grow in upland sites, particularly where drainage is poor. Unlike the grey-stemmed dogwood, silky dogwood grows with many stems emanating from one main point. Its small, white, four-petaled flowers appear from May to June and are borne on flat-topped clusters or umbels. The fruits of these flowers are handsome, dark blue berries.

Both twigs and leaves help to distinguish silky dogwood from other members of the genus. Its twigs are purplish-red, very distinctive in winter. They have fine, silky hairs which explains the origin of the plant's common name. The pith of the twig is brown. The leaves of silky dogwood are egg-shaped and rounded at the base. They are pointed at the tips and have up to five pairs of veins.

Another common name given to this dogwood shrub is kinnikinnik. Certain Indian tribes of the midwest once smoked a tobacco made of leaves and bark, the bark consisting of shavings from the silky dogwood.

Because the plant can be grown in a wide range of soil conditions and provides food and cover for wildlife, it is included in the Buffer Bunch plantings made available by the Connecticut Bureau of Forestry.

The dogwood shrub with the brightest of branches is red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*). It is a plant of the lowlands and grows in wet fields and swampy places. The combination of its crimson branches and white berries make it a strikingly handsome shrub. It ranges in

height from three to nine feet, and has many stems originating from a common center. Some of these stems are prostrate and rooting.

The botanical term for a horizontal stem growing above ground with roots at various points is stolon, and the species name or epithet for this plant, stolonigera, means "bearing stolons."

Although the winter twigs might be confused with those of silky dogwood,

the red-osier has small, round, white berries while those of silky dogwood are blue.

Red-osier berries are sought by many species of song and game birds. The twigs are eaten by cottontail rabbits and white-tailed deer.

There is one very small member of the dogwood family which also occurs in Connecticut, the bunchberry, or dwarf cornel (*Cornus canadensis*). It is a common plant in states farther north, and grows in spreading patches in cool woods, thickets, and bogs.

Records at the Connecticut Botanical Society Herbarium indicate that the plant is present in a number of towns, primarily those in the northern part of the state, although it has been collected in New Haven and Guilford.

Bunchberry is a compact herbaceous plant with an obvious kinship to flowering dogwood. Four white bracts surround a center cluster of tiny, greenish-white flowers. The leaves are egg-shaped, tapering to a point. There are usually six in a whorl beneath the inflorescence. The fruits appear in late summer and early fall and are small clusters of red berries.

This little plant is one to look for, particularly at higher elevations of Connecticut woodlands.

When you are outside during May enjoying the peak of the spring season, keep your eyes open for some of the dogwood shrubs. And, of course, take pleasure in seeing the flowering dogwood once again grace our woodlands and roadsides.

Gray-stemmed dogwood (berries)



(*Cornus racemosa*)

red-osier twigs are a brighter red and have a white pith. During summer, the twigs of red-osier dogwood often turn green. Its flowers are quite similar to those of silky dogwood, being small, four-petaled, and with white and brown umbels. The plants are more easily distinguished during the fall when bearing fruit as

Coastal Recreation Guide Again Available

By Diane Giampa, Sr. Environmental Analyst

Whether your taste for summer fun runs to fishing, swimming, boating, or sightseeing, the DEP's Coastal Recreation Guide will help you locate and enjoy what could turn out to be your favorite spot on the shore this summer.

The DEP's Coastal Management staff produced the recreation map two years ago as part of a special project to increase public awareness of recreational opportunities along the Connecticut coastline. The Guide will be released once again this month and it includes descriptions of and directions to about 50 state and municipal parks, beaches, and boat launches.

The Guide has roughly the same dimensions as a large road map and it folds to a size that fits conveniently into a car's glove compartment. The map shows the Connecticut coastal area only, and divides the shoreline into five enlarged insets that highlight the southern border of the state from Route 95 to the water's edge. The major roads are clearly marked and easy to follow.

On the back of the Guide is a large chart that lists the parks and beaches along the coast. A quick glance across any section of the chart will show whether a particular recreation spot offers a swimming area, boating ramp, fishing pier,



Two fishermen try their luck at Hammonasset Beach.



The Coastal Recreation Guide describes 50 places to go on the shore.

athletic field, campground, picnic area, and restrooms. There is also a short paragraph giving directions to each recreation area, and the Guide provides additional information about entrance fees, telephone numbers, and parking facilities.

Many of you requested and received copies of the map when we announced its release last summer. But if you don't yet have your free copy, simply write to the Coastal Management Office at 71 Capitol Avenue in Hartford, or call us at 566-7114.

Where to go camping in Connecticut parks and forests

Campground Directory

State Park Camping Areas

1. **Black Rock State Park**, Thomaston, 06787. 96 wooded and open sites, concession, dumping station, flush toilets. Showers. Fishing, swimming. No pets. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 283-8088

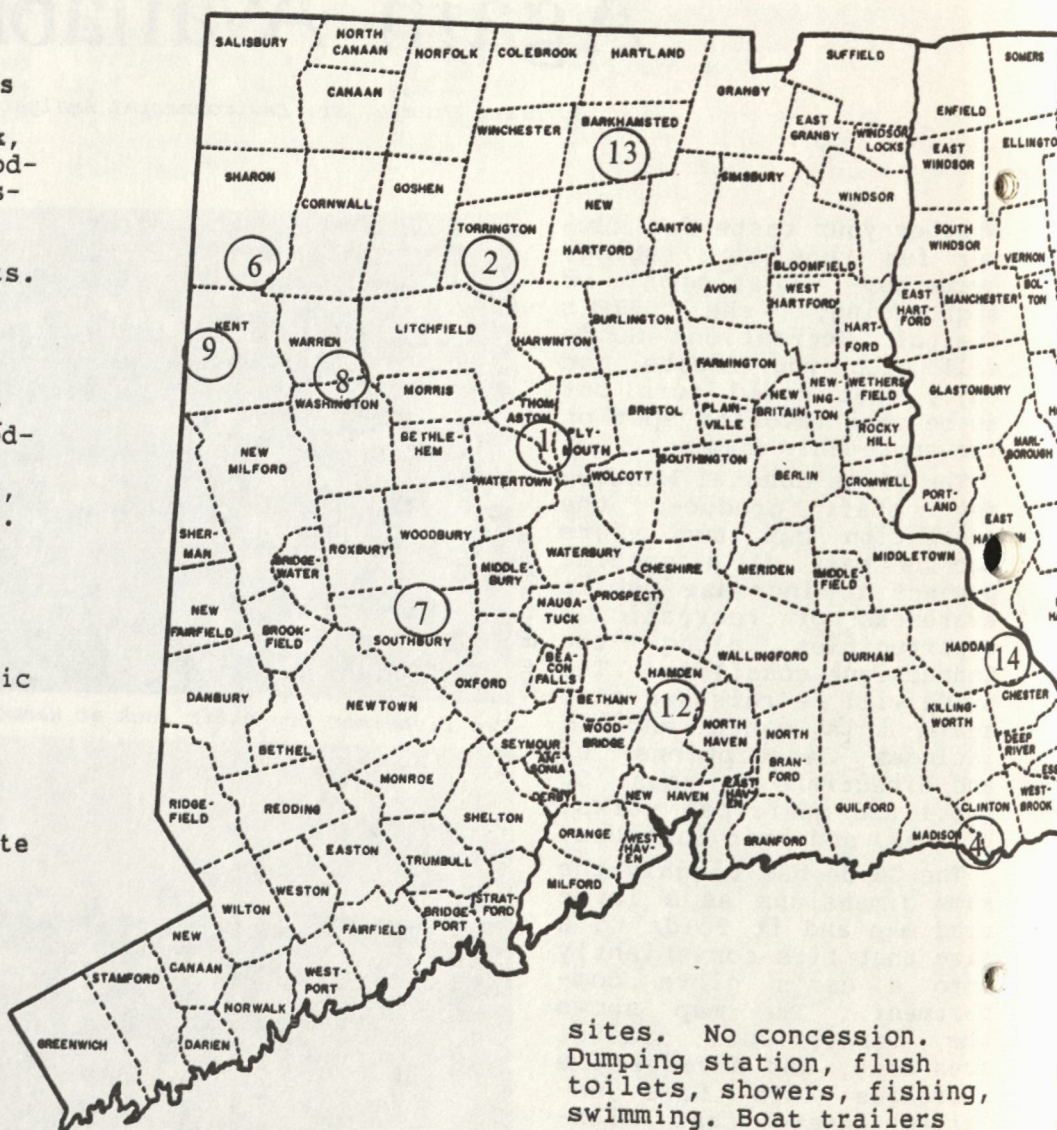
2. **Burr Pond State Park**, Torrington, 06790. Taylor Brook Campground. 40 wooded sites. No concession. Dumping station. Fishing, swimming nearby. No pets. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 379-0172

3. **Devil's Hopyard State Park**, East Haddam 06423. 20 wooded sites near scenic waterfall, no concession. Stream fishing. No swimming. No pets. \$4/night/campsite (203) 873-8566

4. **Hammonasset Beach State Park**, Box 271, Madison 06443. 558 open sites, concession, dumping station, flush toilets and showers most sites. Salt water swimming and fishing. No pets. \$7/night/campsite. (203) 245-2785

5. **Hopeville Pond State Park**, Jewett City 06351. Open April 15 - October 14. 82 wooded sites near pond, concession, dumping station, flush toilets and showers. Fishing, swimming. No pets. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 376-0313

6. **Housatonic Meadows State Park**, Cornwall Bridge, 06754. 104 sites in rustic setting near



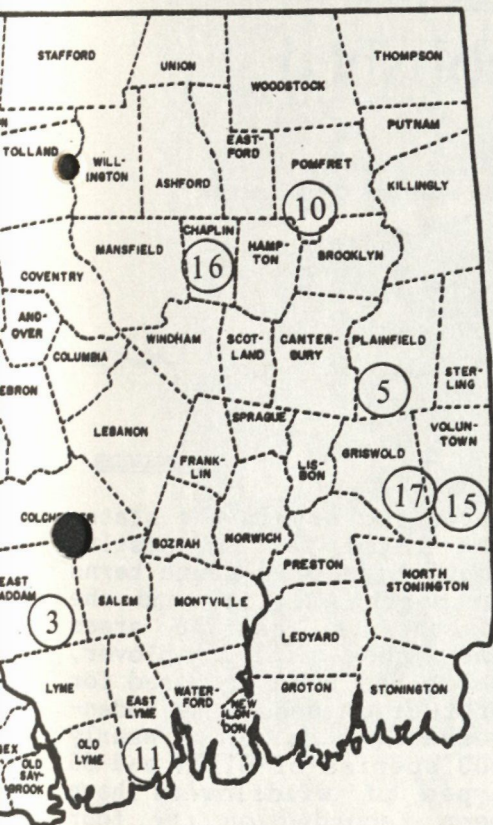
Housatonic River, no concession. Dumping station, flush toilets and showers. No swimming. No pets. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 672-6772

7. **Kettletown State Park**, Southbury, 06488. (Open April 15 - October 14) 72 partly wooded and open

sites. No concession. Dumping station, flush toilets, showers, fishing, swimming. Boat trailers prohibited. No pets. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 264-5678

8. **Lake Waramaug State Park**, New Preston, 06777. (Season May 15 - Sept. 30) 88 wooded and open sites overlooking lake, concession, dumping station, flush toilets, showers, fishing, swimming. No pets. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 868-0220

necticut's



9. **Macedonia Brook State Park**, Kent, 06757. 84 sites in rustic setting, no concession. Stream fishing, excellent hiking along Appalachian Trail. No swimming. No Pets. \$4/night/campsite. (203) 927-4100

10. **Mashamoquet Brook State Park**, Pomfret Center, 06259. Open April 15 - October 14) Two camping areas:

Mashamoquet Brook Campground. 20 wooded sites, no concession, dumping station nearby, fishing, hiking, swimming. No pets. \$4/night/campsite. (203) 928-6121

Wolf Den Campground. 35 open sites. No concession. Flush toilets, showers, dumping station. Fishing, hiking, swimming nearby. No pets. \$4/night/campsite. (203) 928-6121

11. **Rocky Neck State Park**, Box 676, Niantic 06357. 169 wooded and open sites, toilets, showers. Salt water fishing and swimming. No pets. \$7/night/campsite. (203) 739-5471

12. **Sleeping Giant State Park**, 200 Mt. Carmel Avenue, Hamden 06514. 6 wooded sites, no concession. Flush toilets, excellent hiking, no swimming. No reservations. No pets. \$4/night/campsite. (203) 789-7498

State Forest Camping Areas

13. **American Legion State Forest**, P.O. Box 161, Pleasant Valley, 06063. Austin F. Hawes Memorial Campground. Midway between Pleasant Valley and River-town on West River Road. 30 sites in pine woods. No concession. Dumping station, flush toilets, showers. Fishing, no swimming. Pets permitted. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 379-0922

14. **Cockaponset State Forest**, Ranger Road, Had-dam, 06438. Exit 8 off Route 9, 1/2 mile east on Beaver Road and forest headquarters. 25 wooded sites, no concession. Swimming nearby. No reservations. Pets permitted. \$4/night/campsite. (203) 345-4449

15. **Pachaug State Forest**, RFD 1, Voluntown, 06384. Two camping areas:

Green Falls Campground, off Route 138, 3 miles east of Voluntown. 18 wooded sites, no con-

cession. Pond fishing, swimming. No reservations. Pets permitted. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 376-4075

Mt. Misery Campground, off Route 49, north of Voluntown. 22 wooded sites, no concession. Stream fishing, swimming nearby. No reservations. Pets permitted. \$4/night/campsite. (203) 376-4075

Horse Camp Areas

The following camp-grounds have been designed specifically for equestrian use. Reservations are available by contacting the respective camp areas below. Off season camping without fee is provided from October 1 through Thanksgiving.

16. **Natchaug State Forest**, Star Route, Pilsfershire Road, Eastford, 06242.

Silvermine Horse Camp, 28 wooded sites, no concession. Pets permitted. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 974-1562

17. **Pachaug State Forest**, RFD 1, Voluntown, 06384.

Frog Hollow Horse Camp, 18 semi-wooded sties, no concession. Pets permitted. \$6/night/campsite. (203) 376-4075

Additional Information
Maps and descriptive literature are available for certain camping areas from the Office of State Parks and Recreation, 165 Capitol Ave, Hartford, Connecticut 06106. (203) 566-2304



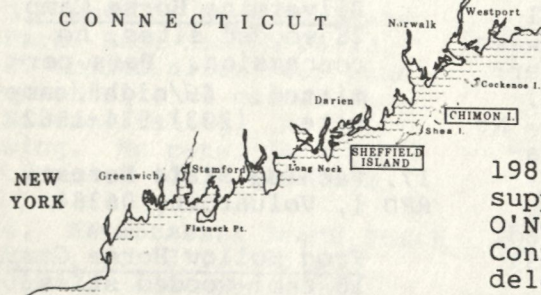
National Wildlife Refuge Officially Established

By Leslie Lewis,
Citizens' Participation Coordinator

Leslie Lewis



Taking part in the ceremony transferring Chimon Island from The Nature Conservancy to the Fish and Wildlife Service are, left to right: Bill Ashe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; L. Gregory Low, The Nature Conservancy; Congressman Stewart B. McKinney; W. Kent Olson, The Nature Conservancy; and Governor William A. O'Neill.



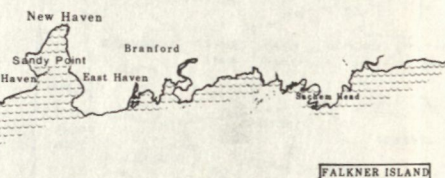
On March 22, 1985, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acquired the first parcel of land for what will become the Connecticut Coastal National Wildlife Refuge. At a ceremony hosted by The Nature Conservancy and Congressman Stewart McKinney, Chimon Island was transferred to the Fish and Wildlife Service from The Conservancy, which had bought the land to hold until the \$1.4 million in federal funds became available for its purchase.

The refuge was authorized by Congress on October 22,

1984, with the bi-partisan support of Governor William O'Neill and the entire Connecticut congressional delegation, including Rep. McKinney and Rep. Bruce Morrison, former Rep. William Ratchford, and Sen. Lowell Weicker. It is the first national wildlife refuge established in the Northeast in 10 years.

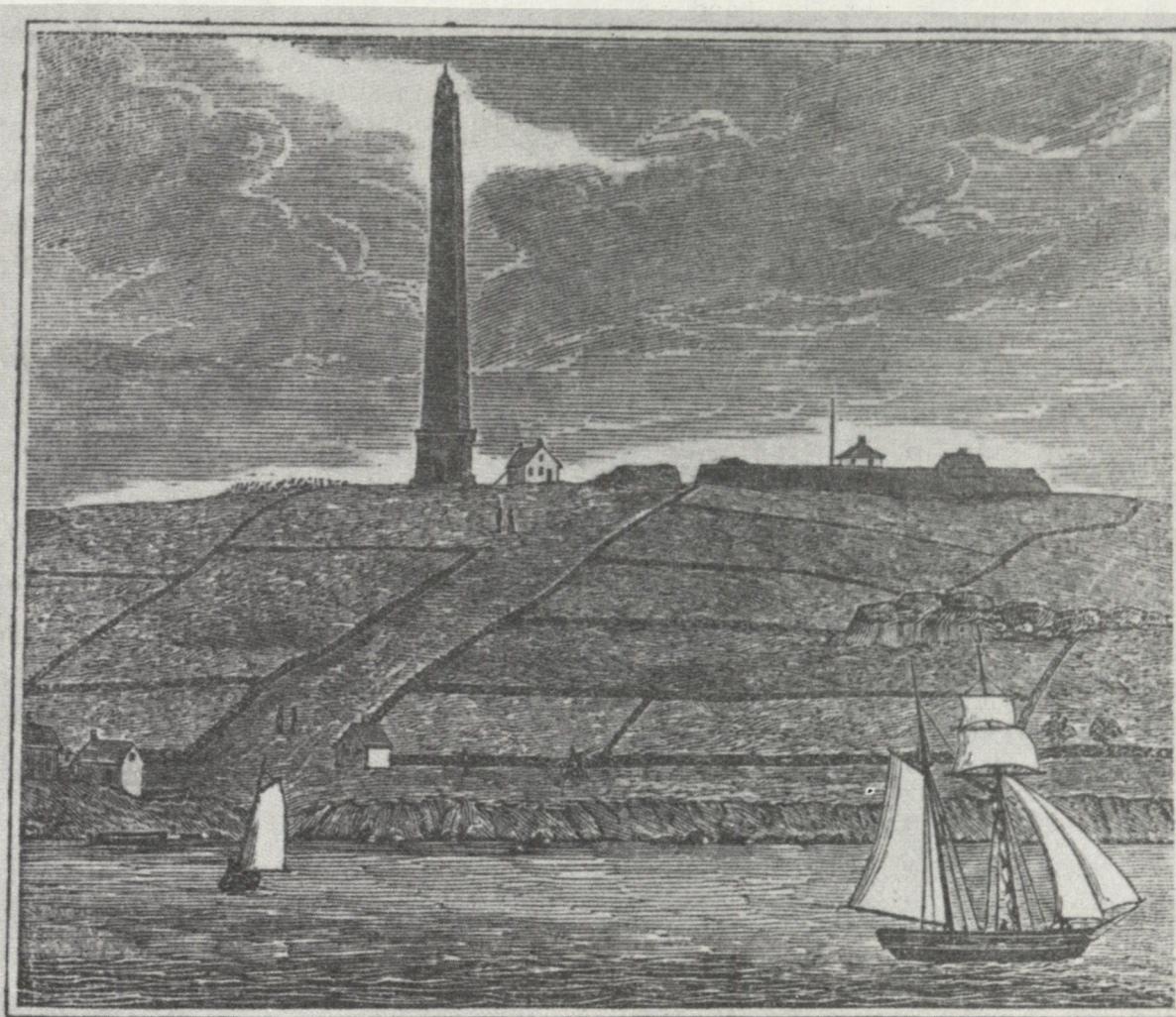
When acquisition of the entire refuge is complete, it will consist of about 150 acres of land on four units: 70-acre Chimon Island, 67-acre Sheffield Island, five-acre Falkner Island, and eight-acre Milford Point. They are among the last relatively undisturbed areas on the Connecticut coast.

The four units of the refuge support the largest



heron rookery in the state, the third largest nesting population of roseate terns in North America, and one of the few nesting areas for the piping plover, which has been proposed for protection under the Endangered Species Act. Nearly 200 species of birds and 65 types of wildflowers have been recorded on the four islands.

In addition to the establishment of the refuge, March 22 saw Governor O'Neill announce the formation of the Connecticut Natural Heritage Registry. A joint venture of the Department of Environmental Protection and The Nature Conservancy, the Registry encourages the preservation of important natural lands in private ownership. This non-binding, non-regulatory program awards plaques to landowners who choose to protect important natural areas. The Registry will help the DEP and The Conservancy record and track significant properties so that they may be preserved for the future.



Groton Monument and Fort Griswold.

Woodcut: View of Groton Monument and Fort Griswold, from Barber's Connecticut Historical Collections (1836).

Fort Griswold State Park

After two centuries, more gaps are filled

By Martha Kelly, Environmental Intern

Photos, courtesy of the Center for Archaeological Studies, Boston University

Fort Griswold State Park, located in Groton, is a rare cultural asset. One of Connecticut's few Revolutionary War battle sites, its significance results from having survived for two centuries with relatively few changes.

The park commemorates a brief, but fiercely fought, battle. Early on September 6, 1781, the British, provoked by the exploits of New London privateers and anxious to distract George Washington from his march toward Yorktown, at-

tacked the fort with a force of 800 men. The attack was a surprise, and only some 150 Americans were on hand to defend. Nevertheless, the Americans fought bravely, refusing the British demands to surrender, and inflicted heavy casualties on the attackers before the superior British numbers prevailed.

Once inside, the British killed half the American force and wounded many others. The battle was over within an hour.

Although abandoned as a military garrison since the War of 1812, the fort was the site of periodic military exercises until World War II. New structures have been added within the 16-acre park, but the old earthen-walled Revolutionary War fort remains. Boston University archaeologist Ricardo Elia suggests that the site be thought of as a "non-renewable cultural resource."

In 1984, concern that this resource be preserved and responsibly used led the DEP's Office of State Parks and Recreation to contract with Boston University's Office of Public Archaeology (OPA) for an archaeological survey. The survey's primary aim, expressed by State Parks and Recreation Specialist Robert Souza, was "to provide the historical data to formulate a management plan." The fort has been subject to erosion over the centuries, a process which has accelerated recently due to the fort's popularity as a spot for viewing the city's fireworks displays -- the site's excellent view of New London Harbor has drawn crowds of as many as 50,000 to July 4th celebrations. In Elia's words, the fort is now "a melted version" of its original form. In an effort to slow the erosion, Park Manager Ted Tetreault decided to close the ramparts of the fort during fireworks displays but does leave them open to the public at all other times.

In addition to the erosion problem, Tetreault faces day-to-day decisions in the park's management. Normally mundane matters, such as the installation of water pipes, take on special delicacy in such a context. The archaeological survey, commissioned with the help of a grant-in-aid by the Connecticut Historical Commission, has identified the site's most sensitive areas so that they may be protected from disruption.

State officials hope to restore the fort, which in Revolutionary times was ringed with a wooden platform and can-

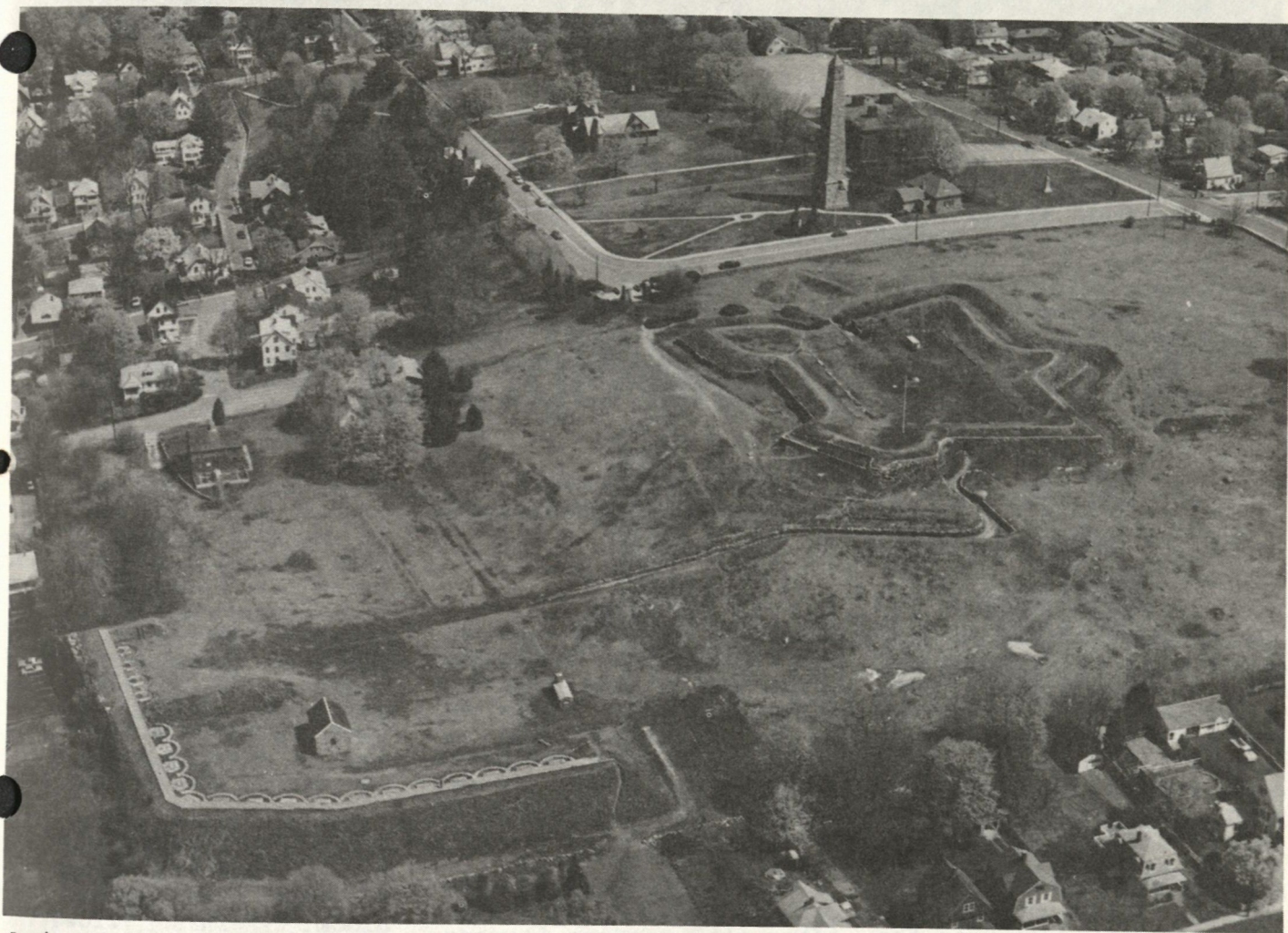
non, but they recognize the importance of accurate knowledge of the fort's buildings and of its soldiers' day-to-day lives. According to Elia, only archaeological investigation can provide information needed to fill in gaps in the historical record. In the case of Fort Griswold, there is a great deal of documentation of the 1781 battle, but little information on the lives of the soldiers garrisoned there during the Revolutionary War.

The large size of the site and the survey's emphasis on conservation caused the archaeologists to minimize their excavations. Their approach was an interdisciplinary one, combining historical research with remote sensing techniques to pinpoint the areas richest in archaeological evidence. These remote sensing techniques ranged from examination of aerial photographs for variations in foliage growth, a source of clues to the locations of long-decayed buildings, to geophysical explorations with such advanced techniques as ground-penetrating radar, magnetic surveys, and resistivity studies. These are state-of-the-art techniques, according to David Poirrier, staff archaeologist with the Connecticut Historical Commission.

From a professional point of view, David Poirrier found the geophysical explorations particularly interesting; "It can reduce the amount of excavation



An archaeologist records test-pit profiles adjacent to the south-west corner of the 1794 blockhouse.



Aerial view of Fort Griswold State Park, which has survived for two centuries with few changes.

needed to answer the question, 'What's there?'" At few sites is it possible to use such a wide variety of geophysical methods as were employed to evaluate Fort Griswold, but 19th century cultivation had left the area unusually free of stones. Comparison of the results of different types of remote sensing allowed the workers to identify, without excavation, 20th century construction, such as water pipes.

In the large open field east and southeast of the fort, test pits were dug at regular intervals. Within the fort itself, larger test pits were dug. A crew of six to eight workers carried out the digs using conventional archaeological methods. This involves painstakingly slow removal of soil with a trowel, after which the investigator sifts the soil for artifacts.

The entire process, including research, excavation, laboratory analysis, and conservation of the artifacts found, lasted from October, 1983, to September,

1984. The longitudinal nature of the study allowed the investigators to assess the uses of the site from pre-historic times up through the present century, providing an important supplement to the historical record, which researchers found to be confusing in many areas.

Through their excavations, the archaeologists located the foundations of Revolutionary-era buildings, which provided reliable information on their method of construction, size, and location, of which Poirrier reports there had previously been only "vague notions."

Beyond foundations and artifacts, many of which are in Boston University laboratories for analysis and preservation, the survey has, in Dave Poirrier's words, produced "a very cooperative interagency relationship." Requests for further information may be addressed to Fort Griswold State Park, 57 Fort Street, Groton, 06340 or phone 445-1729. ■

A Walk in the Spring Woods

By G. Winston Carter

Illustrations by Rosemary Guthrod

Spring starts off with only a few signs of greenery and then seems to gain momentum, like a moving picture film when the frames have been accelerated. As the snow melts from the woodland, there is a smell of fresh earth in the air. Everything seems to be in sharper focus. There is a clean, scrubbed look to the woods. There is a feeling of anticipation as to what the first discovery will be.

Between the early thawing of snow and the appearance of leaves on the trees, a number of early perennial spring flowers must send up leaf and blossom quickly. The melting snow, the increased amount of light, the higher temperature and moisture content in the air, all combine to stimulate plants into rapid growth. Taking advantage of the full sunlight before the overhead canopy develops, they must, in a brief period, manufacture and store enough food in their underground storage organs for quick growth and

flowering in the spring. This adaptation is thought to be one of the legacies of the Ice Age. There had to be a quick way of producing flowers and seeds during the very brief summer. This was and is the solution.

These delicate plants are called spring ephemerals. After they produce flowers, their foliage dies back and no evidence of plant growth is seen until the following spring. They flourish in the leaf-mold which holds more moisture than is found on bare ground in open sunlight.

Trout lily is the first of the ephemerals to flower. It is followed by such plants as spring beauty, rue anemone, Dutchman's breeches, squirrel corn, and cut-leaved toothwort. Ephemerals are often found growing under oaks and hickories which are among the last of the trees in the spring to leaf out.

Some of the common spring flowers -- such as bloodroot, wood anemone, hepatica, violets, May apple, wild ginger, Jack-in-the-pulpit, and trillium --

are not considered ephemerals. They are shade plants with foliage that have the ability to continue manufacturing their food in reduced light after the canopy closes overhead.

Spring wildflowers grow in many different habitats in the woods and there are a great many species in bloom. This flowering period extends over three months to include both late- and early-blooming species. Mid-May is a good time to see some of the early flowers that are still in bloom and to catch some of the flowers that are just beginning to blossom. Frequent hour-long trips to a favorite spot will help you to see growth changes which will help to give a better understanding of each plant.

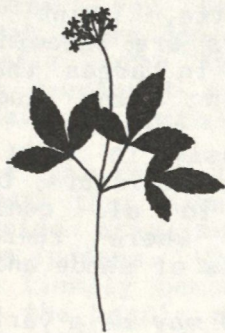
To become familiar with a great variety of species, a larger area of land should be selected. Places like nature centers, sanctuaries, state parks, and state forests are ideal because it is possible to return to the same undisturbed environment many times.

One of my favorite spots for a short walk is our local nature center. Here,

I only have to walk a short distance before I begin to see spring flowers. By mid-May the maples and birches have unfolded their tender new leaves, which are showing pink and varying shades of green. The shadbush is in bloom and the highbush blueberry is dotted with many tiny, pinkish, bell-like flowers. The cinnamon ferns have lost their fiddlehead look and are nearly unfolded.

Low on the ground in a clearing near the brook, arising through a stand of hair cap moss, is the tiny dwarf ginseng. Its white flowers are arranged in a tight, rounded cluster called an umbel. It looks much like true ginseng (*Panax quinquefolium*), long valued by the Chinese for medicine and now quite rare.

Dwarf ginseng is rather common and is much smaller. Its toothed, compound leaflets are arranged in a whorl around the stem. The



Dwarf ginseng
(*Panax trifolius*)

flowers appear from April to June. These are followed by the development

of yellowish berries arranged in clusters.

Nearby there are many small orchid-like flowers often called "gaywings," or flowering wintergreen. This flower is not an orchid. It belongs to the milkwort family. The usual habitat is in rich or rocky



Rue anemone
(*Anemonella thalictroides*)

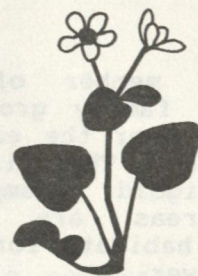
woodland, although I have found it growing in an alkaline bog, and it sometimes is found in dry sites.

Along the brook, there are a number of sensitive ferns. Scattered near them are some of their last year's spore cases which grow on separate stalks. At the top of each stalk are the brown, bead-like spore cases, which have long since discharged their contents.

As we continue walking along the brook, we can see numerous specimens of yellow rocket, or winter

cross, an early member of the mustard family, and two kinds of anemone. Both anemones belong to the buttercup family and each has a rather long blooming period.

Rue anemone is one of the spring ephemerals and its scientific name, *Anemonella*



Marsh marigold
(*Caltha palustris*)

thalictroides. This means "little anemone resembling the meadow rue," which refers to the leaves. The rue anemone is not a true anemone because it belongs to a different genus, but it does resemble the wood anemone. The Ancients had the belief that these flowers would not open until they were stirred by the gentle spring winds. The early Saxons called the wood anemone "flaw flowers," "flaw" meaning "gust." They wave in even the slightest gust of air.

There are physical and behavioral differences in these two kinds of anemones. A behavioral difference is that the flower of the wood anemone closes when the day is overcast, while those of the rue anemone remain open.

Physically, the stem and leaf stalks of rue anemone resemble fine black wire. The leaves are rounded with three lobes. They are arranged in whorls of three. The small flower lacks petals but has five to 10 white sepals and many stamens and pistils. Look carefully at the leaves of both rue and wood anemone to notice how they differ in this and perhaps other ways.

Another member of the buttercup family grows in the water near the edge of the brook. This is the marsh marigold. Swamps and marsh areas are other favorite habitats for this showy flower.

The buttercups are well represented among the spring flowers. This family is a very ancient one and among all the flowering plants it appears to have changed least from its early ancestors.

A short distance from the brook, growing under some trees, are large patches of trout lily. Only the leaves remain now as this is one of the earlier flowers to bloom, being a spring ephemeral. Soon even the leaves will disappear. Trout lily and Dutchman's breeches, another ephemeral, are good examples of the great adaptability of plants to changing temperatures. They have a great deal of sugar in their leaves, which makes it possible for them to endure hard freezes for more than 24 hours before the frozen sap eventually kills the cells.

On the way back, we move to another trail which is rich, moist woodland and less open. The first

discovery is wild geranium, or cranesbill. It is one of the lovelier flowers to

They make a more dramatic showing when they appear in clusters.

Jack-in-the pulpit seems to prefer the same type of habitat as the wild geranium. This is true of this site we are exploring, where we find several of these handsome plants. Jack-in-the pulpit is one of the more familiar of the spring wildflowers. It usually blooms from the middle of May to early June, and is easily identified because of its unusual flower.

Another flower which grows in the moist, rich woodland is the red trillium. The showy red petals will attract one's eye before we notice the strong odor as we kneel to admire it.

In the more open woods, on our return trip, we are able to locate a few pink lady's slippers growing under some pine trees. At times, on other sites, these beautiful orchids appear in huge numbers. Occasionally, it is possible to locate one that is white. Pink lady's slippers are becoming more common in areas that are returning to woodland. They reproduce most vigorously in light shade and some moisture, but are found in all conditions except where there are extremes of shade and sun.

There may be a variety of habitats present in your own community where you can discover some of the flowers I have mentioned. You can extend your exploration even more by visiting limestone-rich sites and areas that have acid bog conditions. The joy of discovery enhances the pleasure to be found in a spring walk.



Jack-in-the-pulpit

(*Arisaema triphyllum*)



blossom during the spring and early summer. Here, there are only scattered specimens of these rose-pink to magenta flowers.

On the Trail of the Big Bear

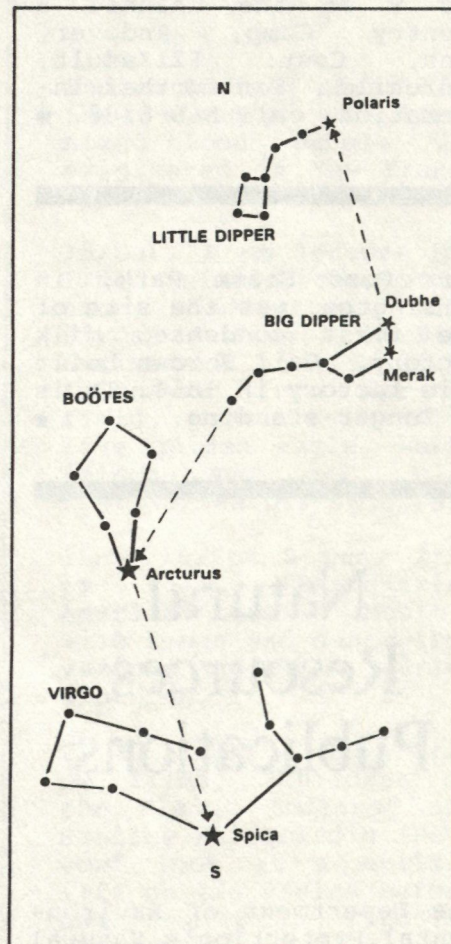
By Fran Downey

Production Designer, Gengras Planetarium

During May, the Big Dipper can be found almost directly overhead. Seven moderately bright stars form the Big Dipper: three make up the handle, the other four mark the Dipper's cup. To many ancient peoples, the Big Dipper was part of a much larger picture, the Big Bear, or Ursa Major. The Dipper's cup is a part of the bear's body, and the handle is his long tail. Of course, you probably know that bears don't have long tails. The American Indians developed a story to explain the anomaly.

At one time there lived a giant bear that roamed the countryside stealing food from the Indians. When the Indians finally became fed up with the bear's antics, a giant Indian chief was sent out to hunt the bear. When the chief came upon the bear, he grabbed the bear by its short, stubby tail and swung it over his head, stretching out its tail. The Indian then swung the bear into the sky, where it remains stuck, even to this day. Some people say that this

story is stretching a "tail" a bit; others, on the other hand, can't bear to read it.



Let's now return to the Big Dipper. Find the last two stars in the cup, Dubhe and Merak. These are often called the pointers. By drawing a line through these two pointer stars, you come to Polaris, the North Star. Polaris is the last star in the handle of the Little Dipper.

Returning once again to the Big Dipper, follow the arc of the Dipper's handle down to the bright star Arcturus. Continue this line downward to the next bright star, Spica. In other words, "Follow the arc to Arcturus, then speed down to Spica."

Arcturus is the foot of the ancient herdsman Boötes. However, it is easier to find Boötes if you think of the constellation as a kite or an ice cream cone, with a scoop of Heavenly Hash.

Spica is a sheaf of wheat held in the hand of Virgo, the maiden. In many parts of the ancient classical world, Virgo was known as the daughter of the harvest.

Eagle Numbers Announced

As spring blooms in Connecticut, our 39 wintering eagles are winging their way north to breed.

"Citizens of Connecticut should feel privileged that so many magnificent eagles spent the winter here," said Rita Maroncelli, Non-game Biologist for DEP's Wildlife Bureau. "During the past winter, the Bureau saw the most enthusiastic public participation to date in the midwinter eagle survey."



The results of the labor of almost 100 volunteers have been tabulated. During the period from January 2 to January 16, 1985, a total of 38 bald eagles and one golden eagle was sighted. A full 66 percent of the wintering population was present on the Connecticut River from Middletown south to Long Island Sound. The Connecticut

River typically supports the majority of the wintering population of eagles. While sighting locations during the survey period were predictable, late January and February brought reports from North Stonington, Mansfield, and Hampton -- areas not usually associated with eagle sightings. Increased public interest led to a higher reporting frequency. The Bureau appreciates the enthusiastic citizen involvement which made the 1985 survey a success. ■

Reminder

The Outdoor Discovery Weekend, programs and events conducted by the staff of the DEP's Education Section, will be held June 8 and 9 at the Channel 3 Country Camp, Andover, Conn. Cost: \$21/adult, \$18/child. For further information, call 566-8108. ■

Burr Pond State Park, in Torrington, was the site of the first condensed milk factory. Gail Borden built this factory in 1854. It is no longer standing. ■

Natural Resources Publications

The Department of Environmental Protection's Natural

Resources Center has announced the availability of two publications. The first is "Protecting Connecticut's Groundwater: a guide for local officials," which has been reprinted due to great demand and the need for local commissions to have multiple copies available for their officials. The price is \$5.00 per copy, plus \$1.00 for each mail order. Connecticut residents add 7.5 percent sales tax.

The second publication of interest is "Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control." This is a new publication which is designed to provide technical and administrative guidance for the development, adoption, and implementation of local erosion and sediment control programs. These guidelines are structured to follow the requirements delineated by Public Act 83-388 -- "An Act Concerning Soil Erosion and Sediment Control." These guidelines are for developers, consultants, landowners, and those officials required to meet the provisions of P.A. 83-388. The 400-page document includes various areas of interest such as "Key Erosion and Sediment Control Principles" and "The Site Planning Process." The price is \$12.00 per copy, plus \$1.00 for each mail order. Connecticut residents add percent sales tax.

For more information, please call 566-7719 or write: Department of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Sales, Room 555, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106. ■

AIAI Activities Planned

MAY 1985:

The American Indian Archaeological Institute is announcing a number of programs and activities. Those interested may write to AIAI, Route 199, Post Office Box 260, Washington, CT 06793, or phone 203-868-0518. Admission to AIAI is by membership or a donation of \$2/adults and \$1/children ages 6-12. AIAI is accessible to the handicapped.

11/Sat, 1 pm slide lecture, "Connecticut River Canoe Experience," by James Dina of South Windsor, who built a birch bark canoe and spent three weeks on the Connecticut River, surviving with the primitive tools he made.

11 & 12/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, "Five-foot Square," follows the findings in an excavation.

18/Sat, 1 pm lecture, "Native Americans in Nineteenth Century American Literature," by Phil Storey.

18 & 19/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, "First Americans," traces the Ice Age migration of this continent's first people.

25/Sat, 1 pm lecture, "James Fenimore Cooper's Indians," by Phil Storey.

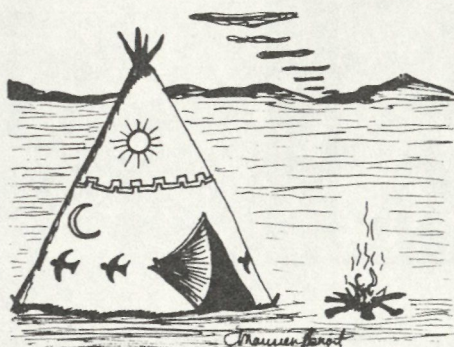
25 & 26/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, "Faces Of Patriots -- Vietnam Vets,"

explores patriotism in its many forms.

JUNE 1985:

1/Sat, 1 pm lecture, "Minerals of the Native American," by John Pawloski.

1 & 2/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, "Metis -- Tracing



Indian Roots," chronicles the history of these mixed-blood people who originated in New France (Canada).

15/Sat, 1 pm lecture and live animals demonstration, "Adventures with Birds of Prey," by Dick Lucius and Julie Collier, falconers from Springfield, Mass. -- with a live golden eagle, hawk, falcon and owl, plus crafted feather objects.

15 & 16/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm film, "Discovering American Indian Music," with songs and dance from various tribes in varied clothing.

22 & 23/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm films, "Children of the Plains Indians" and Shelley Whitebird's "Pow-wow" look at a child's life on the Plains before and after European arrival.

29/Sat, 1 pm slide lecture, "Design in Plains Beadwork," by Barbara Hail, curator at Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Rhode Island.

29 & 30/Sat & Sun, 2:30 pm films, "End of the Trail" and "Tahtonka -- Tragedy of the Plains Indians," describe the effects of the American westward movement on Plains tribes. ■

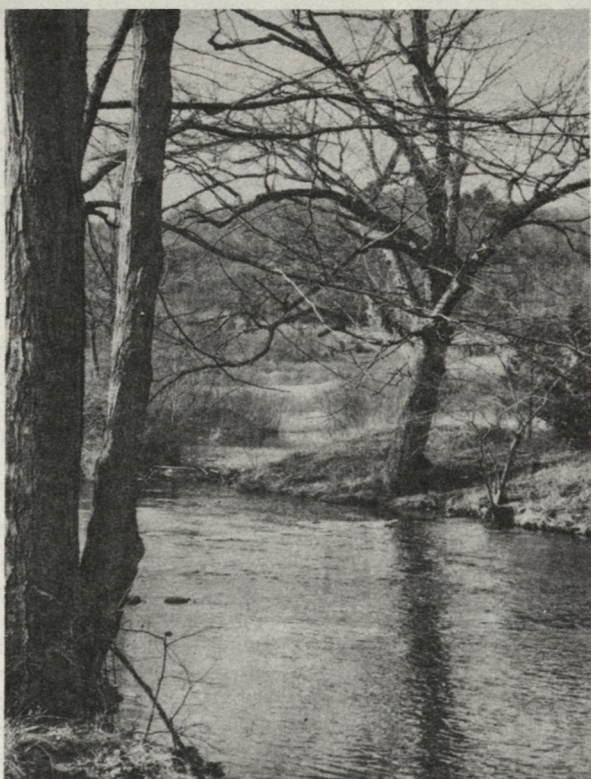
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Endnote

"Now the night flows back, the mighty stillness embraces and includes me; I can see the stars again and the world of starlight. I am 20 miles or more from the nearest fellow human, but instead of loneliness I feel loveliness. Loveliness and a quiet exultation."

Edward Abbey

Desert Solitaire
Ballantine Books,
1968



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